

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of the claims in the application:

1. (Original) A DNA encoding a plant-derived protein whose deletion of function causes an increase in the particle-bearing number of a plant, wherein the DNA is any one of (a) to (d):
 - (a) a DNA encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3;
 - (b) a DNA comprising a coding region comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2;
 - (c) a DNA encoding a protein comprising the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO: 3, wherein one or more amino acids have been substituted, deleted, added, and/or inserted; and
 - (d) a DNA that hybridizes under stringent conditions with a DNA comprising the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2.
2. (Original) The DNA of claim 1, wherein the DNA is derived from rice.
3. (Currently Amended) A DNA encoding an RNA complementary to a transcript of the DNA of claim 1 ~~or 2~~.
4. (Currently Amended) A DNA encoding an RNA having ribozyme activity that specifically cleaves a transcript of the DNA of claim 1 ~~or 2~~.
5. (Currently Amended) A DNA encoding an RNA that suppresses the expression of the DNA of claim 1 ~~or 2~~ by cosuppression effects at the time of expression in plant cells.
6. (Original) A vector comprising the DNA of any one of claims 1 to 5.
7. (Original) A host cell transfected with the vector of claim 6.
8. (Original) A plant cell transfected with the vector of claim 6.

9. (Original) A transformed plant comprising the plant cell of claim 8.
10. (Original) A transformed plant that is an offspring or a clone of the transformed plant of claim 9.
11. (Currently Amended) A reproductive material of the transformed plant of claim 9 ~~or 10~~.
12. (Original) A method for producing a transformed plant, wherein the method comprises the steps of introducing the DNA of any one of claims 1 to 5 into a plant cell, and regenerating a plant body from said plant cell.
13. (Original) A protein encoded by the DNA of claim 1 or 2.
14. (Currently Amended) A method for producing ~~the a protein of claim 13~~, wherein the method comprises the steps of culturing the host cell of claim 7, and collecting a recombinant protein from said cell or from a culture supernatant thereof.
15. (Original) An antibody that binds to the protein of claim 13.
16. (Original) A polynucleotide comprising at least 15 continuous nucleotides that are complementary to the nucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2, or a complementary sequence thereof.
17. (Original) A method for increasing the particle-bearing number of a plant, wherein the method comprises the step of expressing the DNA of any one of claims 3 to 5 in the cells of a plant body.
18. (Currently Amended) An agent for changing the particle-bearing number of a plant, wherein the agent comprises the DNA of ~~any one of claims~~ claim 1 to 5 ~~or the vector of claim 6~~ as an active ingredient.
19. (Original) A method for determining the particle-bearing number of a plant, wherein the method comprises the steps of:
 - (a) preparing a DNA sample from a test plant body, or a reproductive medium thereof;
 - (b) amplifying a region of said DNA sample corresponding to the DNA of claim 1; and

(c) determining the nucleotide sequence of the amplified DNA region;

wherein the plant is determined to be a variety having a small particle-bearing number when the nucleotide sequence encodes a protein whose deletion of function causes an increase in the particle-bearing number of a plant, and the plant is determined to be a variety having a large particle-bearing number when said protein is not encoded.